

Madam Speaker, it is commendable that this top ranking school stresses among its students the importance of good solid values that seem to have lost their luster over time. For example, its policies include a curfew of 11:30 p.m. and no alcoholic beverages in the dorms; rooms must be meticulously clean; self-pride in students' appearance is a must and being a debtor is not an option—the only debt that is owed upon graduation is the debt of duty to one's country. It is not surprising that this institution is top ranked.

The United States Military Academy at West Point in the state of New York has earned the title of Best College for 2009 because of its attention to detail and its great distinction in proficiency, in addition to their undisputed service to our nation. I can see no better way for this 111th Congress to acknowledge and praise this fine institution of "life learners," for its diligent work in producing well-rounded citizens, leaders, innovators and protectors than to congratulate the institution here on the House floor.

HONORING ABDULQAWI MOHAMED

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 5, 2010

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize both the athletic and academic achievements of an impressive young member of the Lackawanna community, Abdulqawi Mohamed.

This past weekend Abdulqawi won the 103 lb weight class at the Division II Wrestling State Championship Tournament in Albany. Abdulqawi finished the season with an amazing record of 43 wins and one loss. His efforts made him the first New York State wrestling champion in the history of Lackawanna High School.

With all of his accomplishments, I was amazed to hear Abdulqawi has only been wrestling for three years. His coaches, Jeff Michelle and Idreas Ahmed, have literally taught him everything he knows about his sport. In addition to wrestling, Abdulqawi is also a very talented soccer player.

Athletics are an integral part of every young person's life; they teach us exactly what we can accomplish through hard work and dedication. However, without a solid academic background, athletics will only take you so far. Abdulqawi is currently in 11th grade at Lackawanna High School and, during his time there, has maintained a 95.3 GPA. Indeed, Abdulqawi is not only a talented athlete but a gifted student as well.

Abdulqawi and his family emigrated from the Republic of Yemen to the United States just three years ago. They are currently residents of Lackawanna's first ward. Abdulqawi and his family are a perfect example of the positive influence members of the Yemenite community are having on Lackawanna.

Madam Speaker, I ask my fellow Members to join me in congratulating Abdulqawi Mohamed for winning the first state wrestling championship in Lackawanna High School history as well as his equally impressive academic achievements.

HONORING 139TH AIRLIFT WING

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 699—honoring and recognizing the significant service and contribution of the men and women of the 139th Airlift Wing, Air National Guard. I would like to pay tribute to their historic past and mission-essential present.

Citizen-soldiers have played a central role in America's defense since the first English colonists settled in North America during the early 17th century. Subsequently, throughout most of our history, the American people have relied upon the militia and National Guard as well as volunteers to provide the vast bulk of their militia manpower in times of war.

These citizen-soldiers have also aided their states in coping with natural disasters and civil unrest. The dual mission—both state and federal—has served as a source of great pride among guardsmen for generations and has helped maintain the highest retention statistics among reserve components. This close relationship between the Guard and the states has also helped knit the fabric of the United States Armed Forces as one of the most trusted institutions in the federal government. The Air National Guard proudly represents the heritage of the citizen airman.

On 18 September 1947, the Air National Guard was born as an independent reserve component of the Air Force. It retained experienced aviators, maintainers and support personnel from World War II, allowing for a legitimate and ready national defense capability. These sons and daughters of America were prepared to defend their country on the front lines and the home front.

The 139th Airlift Wing, a military organization well worthy of recognition and praise, has a long and glorious history. Originally named the 139th Air Transport Group, it was a derivative of the 180th Bombardment Squadron, one of the first federally recognized Air National Guard units in the nation, and was allotted to the state of Missouri at Rosecrans Air National Guard Base, Saint Joseph, Missouri as a part of the Military Air Transport Service.

It was redesignated as the 139th Military Airlift Group on 1 January 1966 when the Military Air Transport Service was deactivated and superseded by the Military Airlift Command. It was redesignated again as the 139th Air Refueling Group on 6 September 1969 within the Tactical Air Command; it was a major contributor during the Vietnam war.

The 139th as an organization continued to lead the way in defending America as it underwent a series of redesignations, inactivations and mission consolidations until its final designation as the 139th Airlift Wing on 1 October 1995 assigned to the Air Combat Command. Two years later the airlift mission with all C-130 units was changed from Air Combat Command to Air Mobility Command.

The 139th Airlift Wing has a long and outstanding record of getting airmen, soldiers and marines, equipment and supplies to and from the fight. This was clearly demonstrated with the massive troop deployment during Operation Desert Storm which was key in delivering a swift and virtually uncontested victory.

This unit served as the hub while America supported humanitarian operations in Bosnia, Sarajevo, Africa, and Haiti. It delivered tens of thousands of tons of relief support and medical and support personnel.

The 139th Airlift Wing deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan with 215 missions and provided 918 sorties. Additionally, the wing is the host of the world renowned Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center (AATTC). This center, a Total Force Integration Initiative, is a combination of Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and Regular Air Force members, and supports NATO air forces training operations.

The civilian airmen of the 139th Airlift Wing played a considerable role in supporting natural disasters and emergencies on the home front as well. They provided disaster relief in response to Hurricane Katrina and the devastating ice storm that struck Northwest Missouri.

The 139th Air Wing is currently supporting Operation Coronet Oak in Puerto Rico and was vital in the rapid relief to Haiti in support of Operation Unified Response. They provided 11 sorties and delivered 23,000 pounds of cargo to mitigate suffering in the middle of the devastated country.

Once again I am very proud of our Armed Services, especially the men and women that make up the 139th Airlift Wing. We pay tribute to our civilian airmen force for their courage, sacrifice and patriotism. We all owe you a debt of gratitude and our undying support.

HONORING MR. EUGENE HEATH

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 5, 2010

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the years of service given to the people of Chautauqua County by Mr. Eugene Heath. Mr. Heath served his constituency faithfully and justly during his tenure as a member of the Kiantone Town Council.

Public service is a difficult and fulfilling career. Any person with a dream may enter but only a few are able to reach the end. Mr. Heath served his term with his head held high and a smile on his face the entire way. I have no doubt that his kind demeanor left a lasting impression on the people of Chautauqua County.

We are truly blessed to have such strong individuals with a desire to make this county the wonderful place that we all know it can be. Mr. Heath is one of those people and that is why, Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to him today.

HONORING HOWARD TWIGGS

HON. LARRY KISSELL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 5, 2010

Mr. KISSELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Howard Twiggs, a friend, lawyer, legislator and citizen scholar. Howard was an attorney of the highest caliber and an ambassador of his profession. He had a fierce passion for justice and service to others and